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Pumpkins roll into Mishicot

Crowds enjoy parade, carvings at 21st annual PumpkinFest

BY SARAH MILLARD

Herald Times Reporter

MISHICOT — Jerry Rath-sack took his carving skills beyond the average jack-o-lantern during PumpkinFest Saturday. Each pumpkin was artfully trans-



band, Hank, and wanted to share the experience with their children.

"There is a lot to do for the kids," she said. Wagner was standing beside the petting zoo, which was near a Civil War re-enactment camp.

The camp was not the only old-fashioned display during the festival. Eugene Durben of Valders, a blacksmith, was pounding metal to build a medieval candleholder.

theme song, which a man driving a tractor back in the field to dance while riding farm equipment. Oconomowoc Public School teacher Gina Wagner to the festival because she has "two little girls," she said. Children, Isa, 3, and 11 months, enjoyed the festival, she said. Denmark at- tached her hus-

"I started by standing and watching someone else do it," he said.

Durben has been blacksmithing for about 20 years and made his own tools. His work is displayed in galleries across Manitowoc County.

"I am a perfectionist," he said as he placed a piece back into the flames. "I can see when something isn't right."

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from "The Wizard of Oz."

A small crowd of festival attendees gathered around the St. Nazianz resident's booth to watch him put the finishing touches on the Cowardly Lion. Rathsack's was one of many displays at the event held Saturday in downtown Mishicot.

The festival, which is in its 21st year, was sponsored by the village of Mishicot and the Mishicot Area Growth and Improvement Committee.

Rathsack, an ice sculptor for about 30 years, began carving pumpkins last year for the festival after being approached by a PumpkinFest committee member who saw him carving cheese.

"Carving ice and pumpkins is on the same idea," he said. "I like carving pumpkins — it seems a little easier."

He did four carvings last year and decided to sculpt something different — the characters from L. Frank Baum's book.

"If we have time, we might even do Dorothy," he said as he began the Tin Man.

► See PUMPKINS, A-11

On the Net

For more pictures, see the photo gallery at www.htrnews.com



Jerry Rathsack of St. Nazianz carves a pumpkin to look like the Cowardly Lion from "The Wizard of Oz" Saturday during Mishicot's PumpkinFest. Participants lined Mishicot's Main Street, taking part in the food, games and entertainment. **Photos by Doug Sundin/HTR**



Lexi Ruppelt, 10, of Kellnersville leaps into a pile of leaves Saturday during Mishicot's PumpkinFest.

Family with the festival the last five years. She rode in the parade for the first time this year. The 1920s car she rode in had mechanical problems as the parade began. "There was a tractor in front of us and they got a tow rope and towed us through the whole parade," she said. "We kept saying it is better than pushing it."

A red truck with a deer head mounted on the front of it played the Adams

School band played in the parade and the Girl Scouts marched past in Halloween costumes while passing out candy.

The Boy Scouts' float, which was decorated with a pumpkin, had a catapult to launch paper confetti into the crowd. The troop cheered when a man shouted, "have them launch that pumpkin."

Evie Sustman, the MAGIC promotions chairwoman, has been involved

Continuing with the pumpkin theme, the festival hosted a baking contest complete with pumpkin doughnuts and pumpkin apple pie.

A noontime parade featured a 1,313-pound pumpkin on the Central Wisconsin Pumpkin Growers' float. The Mishicot High

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